



# *The Old Ironsides Report*



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## **Japanese funds help furnish Ghazeliyah NAC building in Baghdad**

**Story by Sgt. Mark S. Rickert, 372nd MPAD**

BAGHDAD, Iraq – The Ghazeliyah Neighborhood Advisory Council held a ribbon-cutting ceremony in Baghdad Sept. 19, to celebrate the opening of their newly-furnished council building, while thanking the Japanese officials for their generous contributions.

Before the war, this building served as a shop for officers of the former Iraqi military. Now, the people of the neighborhood have decided to convert the building into a place where citizens can come and talk to their neighborhood advisory council about issues regarding the restoration of the neighborhood.

Fortunately, the building survived the war, but looters took everything inside. The council could meet there, but they lacked the proper equipment and utilities for conducting business. There wasn't even furniture to sit on.

"A certain amount of things were needed in the building before the Iraqis could perform the functions of an advisory council," said 2nd Lt. Charles J. Brown, C Company Fire Support Officer with the 1st Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment, 82nd Airborne Division. "Things such as desks, chairs and generators were all important to get the council started. It's hard to hold a committee meeting when you don't have chairs to sit in."

The 82nd Airborne is attached to Task Force 1st Armored Division for Operation Iraqi Freedom.

So when officials from the Japanese government approached soldiers with the 1st of the 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment with a desire to help the citizens of Iraq, soldiers led them to the advisory council.

"The Japanese government officials came to us and asked how they could help," said Brown. "We knew that the advisory council in Ghazeliyah needed help getting off the ground, and so we brought the two together."

The Japanese stepped in with financial support, furnishing the council building with many things, from basic supplies such as desks and filing cabinets, to more expensive equipment such as air-conditioning units and computers.



**Tsukasa Wemura, representing the Japanese Embassy in Baghdad, (right) assisted by a translator, addresses residents of the Ghazeliyah neighborhood.**

"This is not a gift from the Japanese government -- but a gift from the people," said Tsukasa Wemura, the charge-de-fair of the Japanese Embassy in Baghdad. "If you go to Tokyo today, you will see lots of news programs on the television, and all the programs talk about the restoration of Iraq. Hence, we are very much interested in the restoration of the Iraqi government. This is why I say this present is from the people of Japan."

According to Wemura, this is only the first step in Japanese contributions to the local community. Wemura says that the donation is not a huge amount of money, but is a way of showing that the Japanese supports the future of Iraq.

"This is the core of the local society for the democratic process," said Wemura. "People gather here—women come, children come—all to talk and make the society better. This is the core of the community, and this is why we extend our contributions to this center."

### ***Correction:***

Pfc. Alex Miller and Sgt. Ronald Young, engineers, Co. B, 307th Engineer Battalion, were incorrectly identified in a photograph published in yesterday's edition of the Old Ironsides Report.

## NEWS

### **Judge Rules Against Do-Not-Call Registry**

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP) - A federal judge has ruled that the Federal Trade Commission overstepped its authority in creating the national "do-not-call" list against telemarketers. The ruling came in a lawsuit brought by telemarketers who challenged the list of 50.6 million numbers submitted by people who do not want to receive business solicitation calls.

### **Calif. Recall Candidates Ready for Debate**

SACRAMENTO, Calif. (AP) - The top candidates vying to replace Gov. Gray Davis studied Wednesday before squaring off in a nationally televised debate that was likely to be a crucial turning point in the closing days before the Oct. 7 recall election. The debate, set for 6 p.m. at California State University, Sacramento, will be the first - and chances are, only - debate to feature Republican front-runner Arnold Schwarzenegger. He's scheduled to face Democratic Lt. Gov. Cruz Bustamante, Republican state Sen. Tom McClintock, independent Arianna Huffington and Green Peter Camejo.

### **Frail Pope Misses Audience With Illness**

VATICAN CITY (AP) - An increasingly frail Pope John Paul II missed his general audience Wednesday - a rare absence - because of a mild intestinal problem, raising fresh concerns about his health just weeks before he presides at ceremonies marking his 25th anniversary as pope. The 83-year-old pontiff managed to address the crowd at the Vatican in an audio message, although he spoke with a weak voice and slurred his words - symptoms of the Parkinson's disease he has had for years.

### **Chaplain's Thought for the Day:** **Inner Strength**

[I pray] that He would grant you . . . to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man. -- Ephesians 3:16

A large company extracts contaminating substances from steel drums by suction. Powerful pumps draw the materials out of the barrels, but the workers must carefully regulate the force of these pumps. If they take out too much air, the drums will collapse like paper cups because the outer pressure will exceed the inner pressure.

Likewise, when adversity and hardship come into our lives, unless God empowers us from within we will be unable to withstand the pressures from without. It is the spiritual inner man, "strengthened with might through His Spirit," that sustains us and keeps us from crumbling. The Spirit works to strengthen us and renew our minds as we read God's Word and pray.

The power of God in you is greater than the pressure of troubles around you.

## SPORTS

### **Senate Passes Bill to Streamline USOC**

WASHINGTON (AP) -- The Senate has agreed to streamline the United States Olympic Committee in hopes of bringing more accountability to the scandal-ridden organization.

Legislation, approved by voice vote, would dramatically scale back the U.S. committee's governing structure and provides more congressional oversight.

Instead of 124 members, the new USOC board of directors would have nine members, plus the U.S. delegates to the International Olympic Committee and a representative from the Olympic Assembly.

Since the 2000 Games in Sydney, the Olympic committee has had four chief executives and three presidents and endured a bribery scandal involving Salt Lake City's 2002 Winter Olympic bid.

Sen. Ben Nighthorse Campbell, R-Colo., had been holding up the legislation to get assurances that the USOC would keep its headquarters in Colorado Springs, Colo. The legislation now requires the USOC to remain in Colorado Springs until the full board and a supermajority of the larger U.S. Olympic Assembly agree.

A House subcommittee, meanwhile, approved a similar bill Wednesday. Like the Senate measure, the bill advanced by the House Energy and Commerce Committee's trade and consumer protection subcommittee would cut the USOC board of directors to nine members plus the U.S. delegates to the International Olympic Committee.

### **TODAY'S SAFETY TIP**

**We have been in country for months. Now is the time to recheck stability of bunkers, and fighting positions. We must continue to improve our fighting positions.**

- ✓ **Look at weather proofing – sandbags become heavy and collapse**
- ✓ **Replace broken or leaking sandbags**
- ✓ **Ensure drainage ditches are dug around the interior of bunkers/fighting positions**
- ✓ **Inspect/replace timbers as required**

### **On This Day In History: August 25, 622**

#### **Muhammad's Hegira:**

On this day in 622, the prophet Muhammad completes his *Hegira*, or "flight," from Mecca to Medina to escape persecution. In Medina, Muhammad set about building the followers of his religion--Islam--into an organized community and Arabian power. The Hegira would later mark the beginning (year 1) of the Muslim calendar.

source: historychannel.com

